In February 1971, one month after the revelations of the My Lai massacre, an astonishing public inquiry into war crimes committed by American forces in Vietnam was held at a Howard Johnson motel in Detroit. The Vietnam Veterans Against the War organized this event called the Winter Soldier Investigation. More than 125 veterans spoke of atrocities they had witnessed and committed.

Although the press and television news crews attended the event, almost nothing was reported to the American public. Yet, this unprecedented forum marked a turning point in the anti-war movement. It was a pivotal moment in the lives of young vets from around the country who participated, including the young John Kerry. The Winter Soldier Investigation changed him and his comrades forever. Their courage in testifying, their desire to prevent further atrocities and to regain their own humanity, provide a dramatic intensity that makes seeing Winter Soldier an unforgettable experience.

Hearings: Winter Soldier in DC

Iraq and Afghanistan veterans will gather in Washington DC to witness and tell their stories and experiences about U.S. foreign policy in both countries. The nation will hear directly from those who have been there on the ground. This gathering will be in the tradition of the 1971 Winter Soldier investigations held by Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Not since that original event has the American public had such an important opportunity to hear the truth about the brutality of war and the nature of U.S. foreign policy.

For more information: www.hopeoutloud.org